l. **alliteration-** the repetition of identical or similar consonant sounds, normally at the beginnings of words. “Gnus never know pneumonia” is an example of alliteration since, despite the spellings, all four words begin with the “n” sound.

2. **allusion-** a reference in a work of literature to something outside the work, especially to a well-known historical or literary event, person, or work. When T.S. Eliot writes, "To have squeezed the universe into a ball" in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," he is alluding to the lines "Let us roll our strength and all/ Our sweetness up into one ball" in Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress."

3. **assonance-** the repetition of identical or similar vowel sounds. “A land laid waste with all its young men slain” repeats the same “a” sound in “laid,” “waste,” and “slain.”

4. **caesura-** a pause, usually near the middle of a line of verse, usually indicated by the sense of the line, and often greater than the normal pause. For example, one would naturally pause after “human’ in the following line from Alexander Pope:

To err is human, to forgive divine.

5. **consonance-** the repetition of similar consonant sounds in a group of words. The term usually refers to words in which the ending consonants are the same but the vowels that precede them are different. Consonance is found in the following pairs of words: “add” and “read,” “bill and ball,” and “born” and “burn.”

18. end-stopped- a line with a pause at the end. Lines that end with a period, a comma, a colon, a semicolon, an exclamation point, or a question mark are end-stopped lines.

True ease in writing comes from Art, not Chance,

As those move easiest who have learn’d to dance.

6. **eye rhyme-** rhyme that appears correct from spelling, but is half-rhyme or slant rhyme from the pronunciation. Examples include “watch” and “match,” and “love” and “move.”

7. **figurative language-** writing that uses figures of speech (as opposed to literal language or that which is actual or specifically denoted) such as metaphor, irony, and simile. Figurative language uses words to mean something other than their literal meaning. “The black bat night has flown” is figurative, with the metaphor comparing night and bat. “Night is over” says the same thing without figurative language.

8. **hyperbole-** a deliberate, extravagant, and often outrageous exaggeration. It may be used for either serious or comic effect. Macbeth is using hyperbole in the following lines:

. . . .No; this my hand will rather

The multitudinous seas incarnadine,

Making the green one red.

9. **imagery-** the images of a literary work; the sensory details of a work; the figurative language of a work. Imagery has several definitions, but the two that are paramount are the visual auditory, or tactile images evoked by the words of a literary work or the images that figurative language evokes. When an AP question asks you to discuss imagery, you should look especially carefully at the sensory details and the metaphors and similes of a passage. Some diction is also imagery, but not all diction evokes sensory responses.

10. **irony-** the contrast between actual meaning and the suggestion of another meaning. Verbal irony is a figure of speech in which the actual intent is expressed in words which carry the opposite meaning. Irony is likely to be confused with sarcasm, but it differs from sarcasm in that it is usually lighter, less harsh in its wording though in effect probably more cutting because of its indirectness. The ability to recognize irony is one of the surer tests of intelligence and sophistication. Among the devices by which irony is achieved are hyperbole and understatement.

11. **metaphor-** a figurative use of language in which a comparison is expressed without the use of a comparative term like “as,” “like,” or “than.” A simile would say, “night is like a black bat”; a metaphor would say, “the black bat night.”

12. **meter-** the repetition of a regular rhythmic unit in a line of poetry. The meter of a poem emphasizes the musical quality of the language and often relates directly to the subject matter of the poem. Each unit of meter is known as a foot.

13. **metonymy-** a figure of speech which is characterized by the substitution of a term naming an object closely associated with the word in mind for the word itself. In this way we commonly speak of the king as the “crown,” an object closely associated with kingship.

14. **onomatopoeia-** the use of words whose sound suggests their meaning. Examples are “buzz,” “hiss,” or “honk.”

15. **personification-** a kind of metaphor that gives inanimate objects or abstract ideas human characteristics.

16. **pun-** a play on words that are identical or similar in sound but have sharply diverse meanings. Puns can have serious as well as humorous uses. An example is Thomas Hood’s:" They went and told the sexton and the sexton tolled the bell.”

17. **sarcasm-** a type of irony in which a person appears to be praising something but is actually insulting it. Its purpose is to injure or to hurt.

18. **satire-** writing that seeks to arouse a reader’s disapproval of an object by ridicule. Satire is usually comedy that exposes errors with an eye to correct vice and folly. Satire is often found in the poetry of Alexander Pope.

19. **simile-** a directly expressed comparison; a figure of speech comparing two objects, usually with “like,” “as,” or “than.” It is easier to recognize a simile than a metaphor because the comparison is explicit: my love is like a fever; my love is deeper than a well. (The plural of “simile” is “similes” not “similies.”)

20. **symbol-** something that is simultaneously itself and a sign of something else. For example, winter, darkness, and cold are real things, but in literature they are also likely to be used as symbols of death.